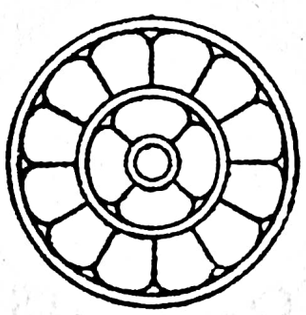
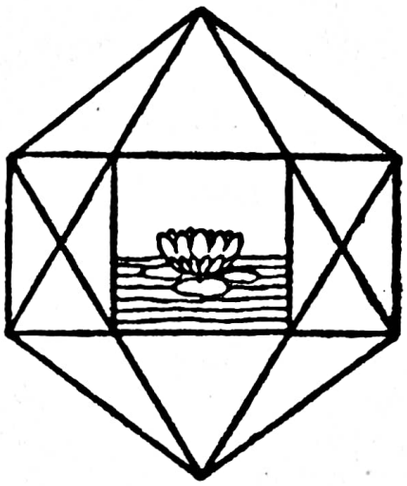
ALL INDIA MAGAZINE

March 1973



The more we advance on the way, the more the need of the Divine Presence becomes imperative and indispensable.

The Mother



All India Magazine

—Matter shall reveal the Spirit's face.

Vol. II No. 6 March 1973

CONTENTS

	Page
Editorial	
Prayer	
Matter-Spirit-Harmony	1
Importance Of The Body	5
Our Trust: Divine's Help	8
Law And Liberty	10
Dharma As Value	13
Individual-Group-Harmony	17
Today And Tommorrow	19
Information Letter	23

For a divine life on earth and our integral progress it is essential that we should understand the nature and importance of the whole of our being. A certain type of spiritual enthusiasm often leads us to regard our material existence as false or meaningless and as a result of it we start neglecting the body or only put up with it as something cumbersome. Such an attitude is not wholly spiritual. It is based on our ignorance about the divine Nature and the divine plan of Evolution. Matter is essentially divine and our body a very important basis of our spiritual life. A true understanding of the principles of our existence will surely help our total advancement, inner growth as well as outer progress, towards the fulfilment of the aim of human life. With right attitude seeking earnestly the Divine's Help, neglecting no part of our progress in life, giving due value to all things in an integral perspective, increasing all our capacities, physical, mental, intellectual, spiritual, we can with confidence move and move on towards the supreme goal.

The present issue of the AIM purports to enlighten us in this regard.

Editor

PRAYER

O LORD, eternal Teacher, Thou whom we can neither name nor understand, but whom we would realise more and more at every moment, enlighten the intelligence, illumine our hearts, transfigure the consciousness; may everybody awaken to the true life, escape from egoism and its train of sorrow and anguish, in order to take refuge in Thy divine and pure Love, source of all peace and all happiness. My heart so full of Thee seems to expand to infinity, and my intelligence wholly enlightened with Thy Presence shines like the purest diamond. Thou art the marvellous magician, he who transfigures everything, makes beauty emerge out of ugliness, light out of darkness, clear water out of mud, knowledge out of ignorance and kindness out of egoism.

In Thee, by Thee, for Thee we live and Thy law is the supreme master of our life.

May Thy will be done in every place, may Thy peace reign over the whole earth!

The Mother

(Prayers And Meditations: March 19, 1914)

MATTER-SPIRIT-HARMONY

The affirmation of a divine life upon earth and an immortal sense in mortal existence can have no base unless we recognise not only eternal Spirit as the inhabitant of this bodily mansion, the wearer of this mutable robe, but accept Matter of which it is made, as a fit and noble material out of which He weaves constantly His garbs, builds recurrently the unending series of His mansions.

Nor is this, even, enough to guard us against a recoil from life in the body unless, with the Upanishads, perceiving behind their appearances the identity in essence of these two extreme terms of existence, we are able to say in the very language of those ancient writings, " Matter also is Brahman ", and to give its full value to the vigorous figure by which the physical universe is described as the external body of the Divine Being. Nor, — so far divided apparently are these two extreme terms,—is that identification convincing to the rational intellect if we refuse to recognise a series of ascending terms (Life, Mind, Supermind and the grades that link Mind to Supermind) between Spirit and Matter. Otherwise the two must appear as irreconcilable opponents bound together in an unhappy wedlock and their divorce the one reasonable solution. To identify them, to represent each in the terms of the other, becomes an artificial creation of thought

opposed to the logic of facts and possible only by an irrational mysticism.

If we assert only pure Spirit and a mechanical unintelligent substance or energy, calling one God or Soul and the other Nature, the inevitable end will be that we shall either deny God or else turn from Nature. For both Thought and Life, a choice then becomes imperative. Thought comes to deny the one as an illusion of the imagination or the other as an illusion of the senses; Life comes to fix on the immaterial and flee from itself in a disgust or a self-forgetting ecstasy, or else to deny its own immortality and take its orientation away from God and towards the animal. Purusha and Prakriti, the passively luminous Soul of the Sankhyas and their mechanical active Energy, have nothing in common, not even their opposite modes of inertia; their antinomies can only be resolved by the cessation of the inertly driven Activity into the immutable Repose upon which it has been casting in vain the sterile procession of its images. Shankara's wordless, inactive Self and his Maya of many names and forms are equally disparate and irreconcilable entities; their rigid antagonism can terminate only by the dissolution of the multitudinous illusion into the sole Truth of an eternal Silence.

The materialist has an easier field; it is possible for him by denying Spirit to arrive at a more readily convincing simplicity of statement, a

real Monism, the Monism of Matter or else of Force. But in this rigidity of statement it is impossible for him to persist permanently. He too ends by positing an unknowable as inert, as remote from the known universe as the passive Purusha or the silent Atman. It serves no purpose but to put off by a vague concession the inexorable demands of Thought or to stand as an excuse for refusing to extend the limits of inquiry.

Therefore, in these barren contradictions the human mind cannot rest satisfied. It must seek always a complete affirmation; it can find it only by a luminous reconciliation. To reach that reconciliation it must traverse the degrees which our inner consciousness imposes on us and, whether by objective method of analysis applied to Life and Mind as to Matter or by subjective synthesis and illumination, arrive at the repose of the ultimate unity without denying the energy of the expressive multiplicity. Only in such a complete and catholic affirmation can all the multiform and apparently contradictory data of existence be harmonised and the manifold conflicting forces which govern our thought and life discover the central Truth which they are here to symbolise and variously fulfil. Then only can our Thought, having attained a true centre, ceasing to wander in circles, work like the Brahman of the Upanishad, fixed and stable even in its play and its worldwide coursing, and our life, knowing

its aim serve it with a serene and settled joy and light as well as with a rhythmically discursive energy.

Sri Aurobindo

(The Life Divine, Cent. Vol., pp. 6-8)

Faith, reliance upon God, surrender and self-giving to the Divine Power are necessary and indispensable. But reliance upon God must not be made an excuse for indolence, weakness and surrender to the impulses of the lower Nature: it must go along with untiring aspiration and a persistent rejection of all that comes in the way of the Divine Truth. The surrender to the Divine must not be turned into a cloak or an occasion for surrender to one's own desires and lower movements or to one's ego or to some force of the ignorance and darkness that puts on a false appearance of the Divine.

Sri Aurobindo

(Bases of Yoga, p. 36)

IMPORTANCE OF THE BODY

That which Nature has evolved for us and has firmly founded is the bodily life. She has effected a certain combination and harmony of the two inferior but most fundamentally necessary elements of our action and progress upon earth,—Matter, which, however the too ethereally spiritual may despise it, is our foundation and the first condition of all our energies and realisations, and the Life-Energy which is our means of existence in a material body and the basis there even of our mental and spiritual activities. She has successfully achieved a certain stability of her constant material movement which is at once sufficiently steady and durable and sufficiently pliable and mutable to provide a fit dwelling-place and instrument for the progressively manifesting god in humanity. This is what is meant by the fable in the Aitreya Upanishad which tells us that the gods rejected the animal forms successively offered to them by the Divine Self and only when man was produced, cried out, "This indeed is perfectly made," and consented to enter in. She has effected also a working compromise between the inertia of matter and the active Life that lives in and feeds on it, by which not only is vital existence sustained, but the fullest developments of mentality are rendered possible. This equilibrium constitutes the basic status of Nature in man and is termed in the

language of Yoga his gross body composed of the material or *food sheath* and the nervous system or vital vehicle, (*annákoṣa and prāṇkoṣa*).

If, then, this inferior equilibrium is the basis and first means of the higher movements which the Universal Power contemplates and if it constitutes the vehicle in which the Divine here seeks to reveal Itself, if the Indian saying is true that the body is the instrument provided for the fulfilment of the right law of our nature, then any final recoil from the physical life must be a turning away from the completeness of the divine Wisdom and a renunciation of its aim in earthly manifestation. Such a refusal may be, owing to some secret law of their development, the right attitude for certain individuals, but never the aim intended for mankind. It can be, therefore, no integral Yoga which ignores the body or makes its annulment or its rejection indispensable to a perfect spirituality. Rather, the perfecting of the body also should be the last triumph of the Spirit and to make the bodily life also divine must be God's final seal upon His work in the universe. The obstacle which the physical presents to the spiritual is no argument for the rejection of the physical; for the unseen providence of things our greatest difficulties are our best opportunities. A Supreme difficulty is Nature's indication to us of a supreme conquest to be won and an ultimate problem to be solved; it is not a warning of an inextricable snare to

be shunned or of an enemy too strong for us from whom we must flee.

Equally, the vital and nervous energies in us are there for a great utility; they too demand the divine realisation of their possibilities in our ultimate fulfilment. The great part assigned to this element in the universal scheme is powerfully emphasised by the catholic wisdom of the Upanishads. "As the spokes of a wheel in its nave, so in the Life-energy is all established, the triple knowledge and the Sacrifice and the power of the strong and the purity of the wise. Under the control of the Life-Energy is all this that is established in the triple heaven." (Prasna Upanishad II. 6 and 13) It is therefore no integral Yoga that kills these nervous energies, forces them into a nerveless quiescence or roots them out as the source of noxious activities. Their purification, not their destruction,—their transformation, control and utilisation is the aim in view with which they have been created and developed in us.

Sri Aurobindo

(The Synthesis of Yoga, Cent. Vol., pp. 6–7)

OUR TRUST : DIVINE'S HELP

Doesn't the Divine help if he is not called?

It is not altogether like that.... The divine Consciousness works always, everywhere and in the same way. The divine Grace is active everywhere, and in all circumstances in the same way. And so on. But according to your personal attitude, you create within yourself the conditions for receiving what is done or for not receiving it. And trust — indeed, trust in the Truth, trust in the Grace, trust in the divine Knowledge — this puts you in that state of receptivity in which you can receive these things. Whilst, if you have no trust ... you may still try to receive something —there are people, for instance, who fling a sort of challenge, they throw a challenge at the Divine and tell him: "Here's the situation such as it is, I am in these conditions which seem to me at least inextricable, it is impossible to get out of them. But if the Divine pulls me out of the difficulty, I shall put my trust in him." There are many people — they do not formulate it like this but many feel and think in this way. Well, this is the worst of all possible conditions. Generally it puts you into a complete hole. And it is exactly the state most opposed to trustfulness. And besides, it is quite a vulgar bargaining: "If you do this for me, I shall have faith that you exist. I am going to try and see if you really exist and whether you are what they say. Do this, and we

are going to see clearly if you succeed. Then I shall trust in you." And many people do that, even without being aware of it. Any number of men say: "How can I have trust in the Divine? I have such a lamentable and unhappy Life!" That is to say, they limit the divine Consciousness to their little personal needs.

If one has the trust, does the help come automatically ?

Even an atom of sincerity suffices, and it comes. And if, truly, one calls very sincerely (not just calling and at the same time saying, "We are going to see now if it is going to succeed,"—that naturally is not a very good condition), but if one calls very sincerely and one sincerely needs the answer, one waits and it *always* comes. And if one can silence one's mind and be a little quiet, one even perceives the coming of the help and what form it takes.

The Mother

(Bulletin of Education Vol. XXIV, No. 3, pp. 51-53)

Three are the words that sum up the first state of the Yoga of devotion: faith, worship, obedience. Three are the words that sum up the second state of the Yoga of devotion: adoration, delight, self-giving. Three are the words that sum up the supreme state of the Yoga of devotion: love, ecstasy, surrender.

LAW AND LIBERTY

The quarrel between law and liberty stands on the same ground and moves to the same solution. The diversity, the variation must be a free variation. Nature does not manufacture, does not impose a pattern or rule from outside; she impels life to grow from within and to assert its own natural law and development modified only by its commerce with its environment. All liberty, individual, national, religious, social, ethical takes its ground upon this fundamental principle of our existence. By liberty we mean the freedom to obey the law of our being; to grow to our natural self-fulfilment; to find out naturally and freely our harmony with our environment. The dangers and disadvantages of liberty, the disorder, strife, waste and confusion to which its wrong use leads are indeed obvious. But they arise from the absence or defect of the sense of unity between individual and individual, between community and community, which pushes them to assert themselves at the expense of each other instead of growing by mutual help and interchange and to assert freedom for themselves in the very act of encroaching on the free development of their fellows. If a real, a spiritual and psychological unity were effectuated, liberty would have no perils and disadvantages; for free individuals enamoured of unity would be compelled by themselves, by their own

need to accommodate perfectly their own growth with the growth of their fellows and would not feel themselves complete except in the free growth of others. Because of our present imperfection and the ignorance of our mind and will, law and regimentation have to be called in to restrain and to compel from outside. The facile advantages of a strong law and compulsion are obvious, but equally great are its disadvantages. Such perfection as it succeeds in creating tends to be mechanical and even the order it imposes turns out to be artificial and liable to break down if the yoke is loosened or the restraining grasp withdrawn. Carried too far an imposed order discourages the principle of natural growth which is the true method of life and may even slay the capacity for real growth. We repress and overstandardise life at our peril; by over-regimentation we crush Nature's initiative and habit of intuitive self-adaptation. Dwarfed or robbed of elasticity, the devitalised individuality, even while it seems outwardly fair and symmetrical, perishes from within. Better anarchy than the long continuance of a law which is not our own or which our real nature cannot assimilate. And all repressive or preventive law is only a makeshift, a substitute for the true law which must develop from within and be not a check on liberty but its outward image and visible expression. Human society progresses really and vitally in proportion as law becomes the child of

freedom; it will reach its perfection when, man having learnt to know and become spiritually one with his fellow-men, the spontaneous law of his society exists only as the outward mould of his self-governed inner liberty.

Sri Aurobindo

(The Ideal of Human Unity, pp. 165–167)

Before deciding that something is wrong in others or in circumstances, you must be quite sure of the correctness of your judgment,—and what judgment is correct so long as one lives in the ordinary consciousness that is based on ignorance and filled with falsehood?

Only the Truth-Consciousness can judge. So it is better, in all circumstances, to leave the judgment to the Divine.

The Mother

DHARMA AS VALUE

The Indian mind whether in the government of life or in the discipline of spirituality, kept always in sight two main truths of our existence. First, our being in its growth has stages through which it must pass : if there are sometimes leaps forward, yet most of its growth is a developing progression; the swiftest race has its stadia. Then again, life is complex and the nature of man is complex; in each life man has to figure a certain sum of his complexity and put that into some kind of order. But the initial movement of life is that form of it which develops the powers of the natural ego in man; self-interest and hedonistic desire are the original human motives,—*kāma, artha.* Indian culture gave a large recognition to this primary turn of our nature. These powers have to be accepted and put in order; for the natural ego-life must be lived and the forces it evolves in the human being must be brought to fulness. But this element must be kept from making any too unbridled claim or heading furiously towards its satisfaction; only so can it get its full results without disaster and only so can it be inspired eventually to go beyond itself and turn in the end to a greater spiritual Good and Bliss. An internal or external anarchy cannot be the rule; a life governed in any absolute or excessive degree by self-will, passion, sense-attraction, self-interest and desire

cannot be the natural whole of a human or a humane existence. The tempting imagination that it can and that this is the true law is a lure with which the Western mind has played in characteristic leanings or outbursts; but this turn unjustly called Paganism, —for the Greek or Pagan intelligence had a noble thought for law and harmony and self-rule,—is alien to the Indian spirit. India has felt the call of the senses not less than Greece, Rome or modern Europe; she perceived very well the possibility of a materialistic life and its attraction worked on certain minds and give birth to the philosophy of the Charvakas: but this could not take full hold or establish even for a time any dominant empire. Even if we can see in it, when lived on a grand scale, a certain perverse greatness, still a collosal egoism indulgent of the sole life of the mind and the senses was regarded by her as the nature of the Asura and Rakshasa. It is the Titanic, gigantic or demoniac type of spirit, permitted in its own plane, but not the proper law for a human life. Another power claims man and overtops desire and self-interest and self-will, the power of the Dharma.

The Dharma, at once religious law of action and deepest law of our nature, is not, as in the Western idea, a creed, cult or ideal inspiring an ethical and social rule; it is the right law of functioning of our life in all its parts. The tendency of man to seek after a just and perfect law of his living finds

its truth and its justification in the Dharma. Everything indeed has its dharma, its law of life imposed on it by its nature; but for man the dharma is the conscious imposition of arule of ideal living on all his members. Dharma is fixed in its essence, but still it develops in our consciousness and evolves and has its stages; there are gradations of spiritual and ethical ascension in the search for the highest law of our nature. All men cannot follow in all things one common and invariable rule. Life is too complex to admit of the arbitrary ideal simplicity which the moralising theorist loves. Natures differ; the position, the work we have to do has its own claims and standards; aim and bent, the call of life, the call of the spirit within is not the same for everyone : the degree and turn of development and the capacity, *adhikāra*, are not equal. Man lives in society and by society, and every society has its own general dharma, and the indivudual life must be fitted into this wider law of movement. But there too the individual's part in society, and his nature and the needs of his capacity and temperament vary and have many kinds and degrees : the social law must make some room for this variety and would lose by being rigidly one for all. The man of knowledge, the man of power, and the productive and acquisitive man, the priest, scholar, poet, artist, ruler, fighter, trader, tiller of the soil, craftsman, labourer, servant cannot usefully have the same training, cannot be shaped in the

same pattern, cannot all follow the same way of living. All ought not to be put under the same tables of the law; for that would be a senseless geometric rigidity that would spoil the plastic truth of life. Each has his type of nature and there must be a rule for the perfection of that type; each has his own proper function and there must be a cannon and ideal for the function. There must be in all things some wise and understanding standard of practice and idea of perfection and living rule,—that is the one thing needful for the Dharma. A lawless impulsion of desire and interest and propensity cannot be allowed to lead human conduct; even in the frankest following of desire and interest and propensity there must be a governing and restraining and directing line, a guidance. There must be an ethic or a science, a restraint as well as a scope arising from the truth of the thing sought, a standard of perfection, an order. Differing with the type of the man and the type of the function these special dharmas would yet rise towards the greater law and truth that contains and overtops the others and is universally effective. This then was the Dharma, special for the special person, stage of devolopment, pursuit of life or individual field of action, but universal too in the broad lines which all ought to pursue.

Sri Aurobindo

(Foundations, of Indian Culture, pp. 117–20)

INDIVIDUAL-GROUP-HARMONY

The whole process of Nature depends on a balancing and a constant tendency to harmony between two poles of life, the individual whom the whole or aggregate nourishes and the whole or aggregate which the individual helps to constitute. Human life forms no exception to the rule. Therefore the perfection of human life must involve the elaboration of an as yet unaccomplished harmony between these two poles of our existence, the individual and the social aggregate. The perfect society will be that which most entirely favours the perfection of the individual; the perfection of the individual will be incomplete if it does not help towards the perfect state of the social aggregate to which he belongs and eventually to that of the largest possible human aggregate, the whole of a united humanity.

For the gradual process of Nature introduces a complication which prevents the individual from standing in a pure and direct relation to the totality of mankind. Between himself and this too immense whole there erect themselves partly as aids, partly as barriers to the final unity, the lesser aggregates which it has been necessary to form in the progressive stages of human culture. For the obstacles of space, the difficulties of organisation and the limitations of the human heart and brain have necessitated the formation first of small, then of

larger and yet larger aggregates so that he may be gradually trained by a progressive approach till he is ready for the final universality. The family, the commune, the clan or tribe, the class, the city-state or congeries of tribes, the nation, the empire are so many stages in this progress and constant enlargement. If the smaller aggregates were destroyed as soon as the larger are successfully formed, this graduation would result in no complexity; but Nature does not follow this course. She seldom destroys entirely the types she has once made or only destroys that for which there is no longer any utility; the rest she keeps in order to serve her need or her passion for variety, richness, multiformity and only effaces the dividing lines or modifies the characteristics and relations sufficiently to allow of the larger unity she is creating. Therefore at every step humanity is confronted with various problems which arise not only from the difficulty of accord between the interests of the individual and those of the immediate aggregate, the community, but between the need and interests of the smaller integralities and the growth of that larger whole which is to ensphere them all.

Sri Aurobindo

(The Ideal Of Human Unity, American Vol. pp. 24–25)

If one has little spiritual capacity, can one increase it ?

I do not know whether it can be said that one has much or little spiritual capacity. It is not like that.

To live the spiritual life what is needed is a reversal of the consciousness. It cannot be compared in any way with the various faculties or possibilities that one has in the mental domain. You can speak of someone that he has not much mental or vital or material capacity and that his possibilities are very limited, and in that case it may be asked what are the means for developing his capacities, that is to say, for acquiring new ones, which is sufficiently difficult. But to live the spiritual life means to open oneself to another world within oneself. It is so to say reversing one's consciousness. The ordinary human consciousness, even in the most developed, even in persons of great talent and realisation, is a movement turned towards the outside. All the energies are moved towards the outside, the whole consciousness is spread outside; and if anything is turned inward, it is very little, very rare, very fragmentary. And that too happens under the pressure of very special circumstances, violent shocks, shocks precisely given by life with the will to reverse a little the extrovert movement.

But all who have lived a spiritual life have had the same experience: all on a sudden, something in their being is reversed, is turned abruptly and sometimes totally inward, at once inward and upward, from the inward to the upward; but it is not external "upward", it is internal and profound, something other than the heights that one conceives physically.

Something has literally turned round, there has been a decisive experience, and the point of view that one has had of life, the way of looking at life, the position that one has with regard to life has suddenly changed and in certain cases in a manner quite definitive and irrevocable.

And once you are turned to the spiritual life and reality, you touch the Infinite, the Eternal and there is no longer any question of more or less capacity or possibility. To say that one has a greater or less capacity to live spiritually is a mental way of conceiving the spiritual life, but it is not at all a proper expression. What one can say is that one is more or less ready for a total and decisive reversal.

At bottom, it is the mental capacity of withdrawing from ordinary activities and of going in search of the spiritual life that can be measured. But as long as you are on the mental domain, in this state, on this plane of consciousness, you cannot do much for others, neither for the life in general nor for individuals in particular, because you yourself

have not the certitude, you do not have the definitive experience, your consciousness is not established in the spiritual world, and all your efforts end in mental activities which have their good side and bad side, but which have not much power; in any case, have not that power of spiritual contagion which alone is truly effective.

The only thing that has truly an effect, is the possibility of transferring to others a state of consciousness in which you live yourself; but this power you cannot invent nor can you imitate, nor can you appear to have it; it comes spontaneously only when you are established in that state, when you *live* in it and not *try* to live in it, when you are there in it. And that is why all those who have truly a spiritual life cannot be deceived.

And imitation of spiritual life can delude people who are still in the mind, but they who have realised in themselves this reversal of the consciousness, who have a wholly different relation with the 'external being, cannot be duped and cannot dupe themselves.

It is these people that the mental being does not understand. So long as you are in the mental consciousness, even the highest, and see the spiritual life from outside, you are judging with your mental faculties, with this habit of seeking, making mistakes, correcting, progressing, searching again, and you imagine that they who are in the spiritual life suffer from the same icnapacity, but it is a very gross error.

When the reversal of the being has taken place, all that is finished. You search no more, you see. You deduce no more, you know. You grope no more, you march straight to the goal. And when you have gone farther — a little farther only — you know, you feel, you live this supreme truth that the Supreme Truth alone acts, that the Supreme Lord alone wills, knows and does through the human beings. How can there be errors at all possible? What He does He does because He wills it. He does it because he wills to do it.

To our erring vision these are perhaps incomprehensible actions, but they have a sense and a goal and they lead where they should lead.

If you wish sincerely to help others and the world, the best thing you can do is to become yourself what you want others to become — not merely as an example, but because you become a centre of radiating power, that by the simple fact of its existence compels the rest of the world to transform itself.

The Mother

(Bulletin Of Education: Vol. XI, No. 3, pp. 95–101)